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RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

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And I wrote him after his July 15th speech: Dear Mr. President: Amtrak!!!!! Any fool can see that your Amtrak policy is incredible, that you are incredible. I hope you appreciate my understatement. Offered constructively. No compromises. 100% incredible. Sincerely, Robert J. Swan - public transit catalyst, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801. $10 for updated AMTRAK LAW includes changes when they are enacted shortly.

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Letters

In a press release of June 7, Amtrak stated that advance reservations were being booked at the rate of $1 million per day--a $400,000 per day increase over the same period last year.

If this level of bookings continues only thru August, Amtrak will have earned in additional revenue the amount equivalent to what it projected the DOT cutbacks would save in annual federal funding--$48 million, or 8%.

Not only does this show that the present system can be maintained without increases in federal operating subsidies, but if Amtrak management made even minimal attempts to fulfill its legislative mandate to run a national system, by fixing the cars and advertising a reliable service, subsidy requirements could be substantially reduced on an expanded system.

The American people are being made victims of poor economics--not of the passenger train--but of the small minds in DOT and Amtrak.

James W. Hofmeister, State Chairman
Texas Association of Railroad Passengers
Houston, Texas

The newspapers make interesting reading these days as we read of Amtrak's patronage soaring to record levels, despite a lack of enough equipment. Amtrak is more popular than ever, and not only because of necessity.

At the same time, the Carter "Administration" is enjoying record LOW popularity because of its Three-Stooges style handling of the energy crunch. The stubborn, ignorant White House continues to try to cut Amtrak despite overwhelming public opposition and jam-packed trains...

David A. Schwengel, Director, NARP Region VII
Secretary, WisARP
West Bend, Wisconsin

I agree with your thesis (last issue) that it matters little what individual is in the role of Transportation Secretary. Each new Secretary seems, if not worse, than just as bad as the last when it comes to supporting rail passenger service.

The reason, I think, lies in the orders the Cabinet gets from the White House. The Secretary has little freedom to do anything but follow the party line established by the President and his staff. In the case of President Carter, it seems that he has little enthusiasm for rail travel--to put it lightly. There is no record of his riding an American train since he came into prominence as a presidential candidate. While his Southern supporters dreamed up a train ride (remember the "Peanut Special"?) to celebrate his inauguration, Carter himself was not involved in it. White House insiders have said (as reported some time ago in RTN) that subway trains are "anathema" to Carter. Thus his lukewarm support for rail transit.

ON THE COVER

Amtrak has a new paint scheme for its equipment--three equal-width red, white and blue stripes with "Amtrak" lettered in black in the white area--and here it is seen on Rail Diesel Car 27, the ex-New Haven "Roger Williams" RDC, applied only to the nose of the self-propelled car. The background color is platinum mist. RDC 28 has the same colors. Photo from an Ektachrome original by Robert Underwood, taken a few weeks ago at Springfield, Massachusetts.

I believe that it is Carter's personal reactions to train travel that are playing havoc with our nation's transportation priorities. If I may indulge in some long-distance analysis of Carter's psyche, I suspect that Carter subconsciously equates train travel with earthboundedness and with his lowly background as a peanut farmer. He hates his background and wants to fly above it all (in Air Force One) as a statement of his achievement as a national leader. Subways and trains represent to him the tubular, underground peanuts that drag him back to his past that he strives to repudiate. Being in the air represents freedom and "rising above" his past, while being on a train symbolizes a frustrating confinement to the role of a lowly dirt farmer.

It is tragic (if my analysis is correct) that the unconscious vagaries of a single person in a position of power should have so much impact on the public policies of an entire nation. I don't think it should be that way in a democracy.

George Hyko
San Francisco, California

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"With gas lines still rankling, however, and the long United Airlines strike a recent memory, the House put trains ahead of fiscal prudence. Amtrak's managers were instructed to scrap some of its most uneconomical runs, but the House voted to put enough money into Amtrak--$2.5 billion over three years--to save such money-losers as the "Pioneer" from Portland to Ogden and the "Inter-American" from Chicago to Laredo. Long-distance Amtrak service will remain so expensive that it would be cheaper to give each passenger a free, first-class air ticket.

"There is something even more galling about this than how much tax money it would waste. Most people imagine that trains take the place of many cars, saving energy. Not necessarily so; the House's Amtrak plan would waste it. A locomotive pulling several full cars can save a lot of energy over autos and planes; it can almost match the efficiency of buses. But most trains rarely run full. And even under the most optimistic assumptions, the trains in question are likely to carry so few passengers that the Congressional Budget Office predicts no real energy savings from Amtrak through the mid-1980's."

--New York Times editorial, July 31.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"Other lines that could be saved from elimination by the proposal include:... the San Joaquin between Bakerfield, Ohio, and Oakland, Calif.;..."

--Missoula (MT) Missoulian, late June.

(Via Kansas City.)

"It will recognize California is a multi-model transportation state," said Walter Ingalls, chairman of the Assembly Transportation Committee."

--San Francisco Examiner, June 27.

(None of which fits reality.)

"However, in terms of cost efficiency, elapsed time, comfort and convenience, each mode of transportation has its own logical market, measurable by distance covered. Buses, for instance, most effectively meet market demands in the 0-250 mile range."

--VIA Rail Canada Chairman J. Frank Roberts in address on Intermodality to the American Public Transit Association, Montreal, June 26.

(The zero range is our favorite.)

ADAMS IS REPLACED AT THE DOT

Brock Adams is out as Secretary of Transportation, and Neil Goldschmidt, Mayor of Portland, Oregon, has been named by President Carter as his successor. Until the Senate approves him, W. Graham Claytor Jr. is Acting Secretary.

The demise of Adams came with the President's cabinet shakeup of July 17. On that date Carter made the controversial move of asking all cabinet officers to submit their resignations for his consideration. The press reported that on July 19 Adams was told by the White House's Hamilton Jordan that he could remain as DOT Secretary if he got rid of most of the other high DOT officials. Adams agreed to consider these terms, to the surprise of Jordan who thought he would have to refuse them on the spot. Adams then announced a set of conditions under which he would stay, including more support from the White House for mass transit and not having to report to Jordan. On July 20 Adams spoke with Carter about his terms, but Carter would not give in on allowing Adams to report directly to him, so Adams and some of his associates in the DOT resigned. Adams had successfully evaded the act of being fired.

The conditions that White House Chief of Staff Jordan had raised included firing Deputy Secretary Alan Butchman, Assistant Secretary Terry Bracy, acting UMTA Director Gary Gayton, and DOT general counsel Linda Kamm. Adams had been angered at the Administration's cutting back a mass transit budget from $10 to $7 billion. Adams had successfully had the $10 billion included in Carter's new energy program, but the Office of Management and Budget later reduced the sum. The Administration had also wanted Adams to go slower on gasoline mileage requirements for auto manufacturers.

After his departure from DOT, Adams said he would probably go into law practice, but there were indications from his home state of Washington that he would challenge the state's governor in the upcoming election, or would run for the Senate if the aging Warren Magnuson decided to retire.

Adams was not out because of the Amtrak question. That apparently never came up. Relations with new Chief of Staff Hamilton Jordan, with whom he had previously sparred, were the main problem.

Graham Claytor was immediately named Acting DOT Secretary, temporarily leaving his post as Secretary of the Navy. Claytor, former head of Southern Railway, had been named Navy Secretary by Carter in January of 1977. He serves for 30 days to allow the Senate time to confirm the next Secretary. The change of secretaries came in the middle of Congress's work on the Amtrak bill. On July 24 Claytor sent a message to a House Committee urging them to oppose a one-year moratorium on Amtrak cuts under threat of Presidential veto (more on this in another news item).

Neil Edward Goldschmidt, 39, the DOT Secretary-designate, has been mayor of Portland since 1973. In that city he has been praised for his revitalization of the central city thru development of public transit (free buses run in the city center) and resistance of freeway building. A 14-mile trolley line is scheduled for beginning construction next year in place of a planned Mt. Hood Freeway. Mr. Goldschmidt met with Carter July 27 and was offered the job. He told reporters later that "accessibility" to the President wouldn't be a problem, and that he feels the President supports mass transit.

PRESIDENT CARTER RIDES A TRAIN

President and Mrs. Carter and their party took a train from Washington to Baltimore on Aug 7, the first recorded instance of their riding an American train since Carter came into presidential political prominence. They took the 8am Metroliner Service from Washington--train 104.

The train covered the 40 miles in 37 minutes, arriving one minute ahead of schedule. The President's party occupied an entire snack bar coach. At a Sons of

Italy convention in Baltimore, Carter said "I took the train this morning, not only because it is the best way to come from Washington to Baltimore, but also because I wanted to show my support for a strong mass transportation system." He added, "I want to demonstrate that trains represent the future and not the past in transportation in America." Carter said he intends to keep the Northeast Corridor open. He said, "In recent years there have been too many bankruptcies, too many terminations of rail service, to a great degree brought about by excessive Government regulation. Amtrak must become more efficient, more comfortable and more economical." Carter had evidently intended to travel by helicopter, but for unknown reasons he changed his mind, and the helicopter instead followed the train. The party took a similar train back to Washington later.

AMTRAK BILL: ROUTE CUTS PARED

The House and the Senate have both passed versions of the Amtrak funding bill and then gone on recess until September, leaving until then the task of compromising the two bills, which are very similar, in a joint committee.

The House bill was passed July 25, and provides a 3-year funding authorization for Amtrak in the amount of $2.5 billion--the first time the rail corporation has had more than a one-year funding, giving it the opportunity for longer-range planning than in the past. Because of the energy crisis-induced higher ridership, Congressmen were compelled not to cut the system back as much as the DOT had originally wanted. But an amendment by Rep. Gore of Tennessee and Rep. Fowler of Georgia to freeze the present system for one year was defeated by a vote of 214-197, after intense lobbying efforts by Acting DOT Secretary Graham Claytor and by Conrail and other railroad lobbyists. Claytor told Congressmen on July 24 that the President would veto any Amtrak bill that included a freeze on cutbacks. But Rep. Gore on the House floor informed Rep. Florio that the veto threat "doesn't amount to a hill of beans"--that the White House had told him the Amtrak bill would be signed. Claytor will become Deputy Secretary of Defense after his stint as DOT's man, and he reportedly urged the defeat of the route cutback freeze "because we can use that money a lot more at the Pentagon" (according to the Washington Post). Rep. Harley Staggers, chairman of the House Commerce Committee, called for Amtrak President Alan Boyd to be removed, saying "We want a can-do man running Amtrak". Conrail lobbyists opposed any cutback freeze because they want the NATIONAL LIMITED eliminated, a move which would pave the way for Conrail's case for abandoning 23 miles of track between Richmond IN and Indianapolis which the passenger train uses. Rail supporters were embittered at these events, some asking by what license do federally-subsidized rail lobbyists oppose Amtrak.

The Senate on August 1 passed a similar bill, but one with only a 2-year authorization, by a vote of 89-11. As in the House, an amendment to freeze the system was defeated, 65-35. The amendment was offered by Sen. John Melcher of Montana, and was the same as that that Sen. Church of Idaho had supported.

Both bills reduce the proposed 43% Amtrak cutback to about 18%. In the House, an amendment by Rep. Robert Duncan provides for "regional balance" in cutbacks, assuring that no section of the U.S. would be without rail passenger service as a result of cutbacks. His efforts appeared to save the PIONEER from extinction. Other Congressmen offered amendments to save service in their particular areas. In both bills, Amtrak is instructed to apply complex route criteria to make cutbacks. Long distance trains cannot be dropped if they carry at least 150 passengers per mile and their deficit is no more than 7¢ per passenger-mile. Short distance trains must be retained if they carry at least 80 passengers per mile and their deficit is not over 9¢ per passenger-mile. Applying these criteria, the trains most likely to be dropped are: NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, FLORIDIAN, LONE STAR, NATIONAL LIMITED, one NY-Florida train (SILVER METEOR or CHAMPION), and HILLTOPPER. The SAN JOAQUIN might be dropped, but it is believed that the state of California

would help fund it in order to keep it running. As reported earlier, a new train will begin service between Los Angeles and Ogden via Las Vegas (see separate news item).

One of the favorable features of the bills is that they provide capital funding for Amtrak for new equipment over the next 3 years--about $250 million per year. Another feature calls for saving all trains considered commuter-type trains until at least Apr 1, 1981 by providing for a funding split of 80-20% with Amtrak carrying the burden and the states paying the remainder. The Chicago-Valparaiso commuter line would also be transferred to Amtrak. The BLUE RIDGE would be another train preserved under the commuter section.

WHAT RAIL SUPPORTERS CAN DO NOW

It is believed that the joint Senate-House conference committee in early September might not actually take place; the staffs of respective committees could iron out the differences in the two bills without calling a formal meeting. The Senate bill, somewhat less favorable than the House's, might be accepted by the House.

The real issue here, according to politically-oriented rail supporters, is that the bill represents "politics as usual", with the resulting Amtrak system being perhaps even more political than the present one. Rail supporter leaders are urging others to do the following between now and the end of August: write to Congressman James J. Florio (D-NJ) and Senator Howard Cannon (Nev.) and to their own Senators and Congressmen and urge them to make sure that no heavily-used train is discontinued because of the "politics as usual" routine. Also, if you have experienced trip cancellations due to heavy ridership, inability to get reservations, and other such problems, send documentation of your problems to the National Association of RR Passengers (417 New Jersey Ave. S.E., Washington DC 20003) and/or to Senator Boren of Oklahoma and Senator Melcher of Montana. The address of all Senators is U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510; the address of Congressmen is: House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515.

(Footnote: the Senate bill contains an amendment by Sen. Jim Sasser (D-Tenn) that would require Amtrak to reduce fares 25% for elderly and handicapped people.)

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

CHICAGO'S RTA BEGAN on July 30 operating two commuter trains over the N&W between Chicago and Orland Park. Both sets of equipment now operate with RTA locomotives and bilevel stainless steel coaches. TV interviews aboard the last train of conventional equipment on July 27 showed the train in disrepair--paint peeling from the ceilings, faulty air conditioning, and serious overcrowding, with passengers sitting on the floor, and several wedged in the overhead luggage racks!

CHICAGO-TO-VALPARAISO commuter run is now using the former N&W cars used on the run mentioned above. Conrail had previously leased ex-CNW bilevels from Amtrak, but Amtrak needed them back. Conrail said that, bad as it is, the N&W equipment was the only available anywhere in the U.S. The N&W names were painted out, but no refurbishing of the cars was done before putting them into service on July 30.

NEW YORK CITY is getting $10 million in federal funds to restore the Grand Central Terminal subway complex, and $22 million for subway stations at Herald Square and at 42nd street and Eighth Avenue. The White House was to announce the grant at a Grand Central ceremony on August 8.

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER reports on a lack of buses on the SEPTA system, with too many buses bad-ordered for repairs when ridership is climbing sharply.

PORTLAND'S TRI-MET BUS system had an all-time high ridership in June--14% above June 1978, and system officials have asked businesses to stagger work hours to spread out ridership away from peak travel hours because of equipment shortages.

THE LONG ISLAND Rail Road is using electric-powered automobiles for substation personnal. Operating costs are half that of gasoline vehicles.

MORNING BART SERVICE on July 18 was disrupted by a series of mechanical failures. BART system riders have been riding under the threat of a possible strike for some weeks, as negotiations get under way again. Workers at a maintenance barn in Concord locked themselves in for 5 days. A court order ended the lock-in and averted a strike against the system. The major disputed item is a cost-of-living allowance that BART would like to end.

MILWAUKEE ROAD COMMUTERS in Chicago were delayed a half hour on July 31 by smoke from a fire of spilled diesel oil on nearby CNW tracks at Kinzie and Clinton streets. The same day, 10,000 passengers on ICG commuter trains were delayed 40 minutes after an elderly man was killed while standing on tracks at 63rd St.

CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY'S new chairman Eugene M. Barnes elected July 11 has pledged to avoid fare increases for the next two years and to keep trains running during winter storms. The same day, the city showed the first of 6 2-car trains fitted with 41-inch snowplows. In addition, smaller, under-the-coupler snowplows are being installed on 200 commuter cars, and 162 portable snowblowers for stations are being purchased. P.A. systems will be installed in all 140 transit stations, and 100 extra electric motors for spares are being obtained.

PHILADELPHIA WAS GRANTED in late June $55 million for transit improvements.

THE "TIJUANA TROLLEY", a German-made electric tram to run from the Amtrak station in San Diego to the Mexican border, got a final approval June 25, with a $56 million budget. The next 12 months will see construction taking place. $840,000 was approved by the Metropolitan Transit Development Board to improve the San Diego train station.

DOT'S CONTROVERSIAL "TRANSBUS" to accommodate handicapped travelers is having its specifications assessed by experts contracted by the National Research Council. Their final report should come August 31. Previously, no manufacturer would bid on building the buses for the DOT. On June 29 the American Public Transit Association and 12 transit agencies filed a suit to prevent federal enforcement of a requirement that all new transit buses be fitted for wheelchair access. The DOT filed a brief in U.S. District Court in Washington July 23 stating that its requirements are "reasonable and realistic".

RAIL CANADA

THE FINAL PLAN for Eastern Transcontinental Passenger Train Service was issued by the Canadian Transport Commission on June 28. It recommends two daily trains, the OCEAN and the ATLANTIC, between Montreal and Halifax, with connecting RDC cars to and from Gaspe. The Montreal-Sherbrooke RDC is continued. In New Brunswick, a daily RDC would run Campbellton-Moncton, and the existing Edmundston-Moncton RDC would operate. A daily RDC would run Saint John-Halifax. There would be a daily RDC Halifax-Sydney, and a second daily Halifax-Sydney service by means of a connecting train Halifax-Truro and an RDC Truro-Sydney.

Transport 2000 Canada, the consumer organization, expressed strong support for the Final Plan. T-2000 officials Harry Gow and John Pearce said the plan provides for good thru service on both CN and CP lines between Montreal and the Maritimes, and actually improves present service between Halifax, Sydney, Moncton and Saint John. The only defect in the plan, said T-2000, is a reduction of service between Quebec and the Lower St. Lawrence. They also said the speeds of most trains should be increased. They said they particularly appreciate the extension of the present Montreal-Saint John train thru to Moncton and Halifax; the proposal for restoration of a downtown station in Saint John; and the improvement of arrival times on the Halifax-Sydney run. They also drew attention to the CTC's important recommenda-

(continued on page 20)

TRAVELING THE TWO TRANSCONS OF VIA

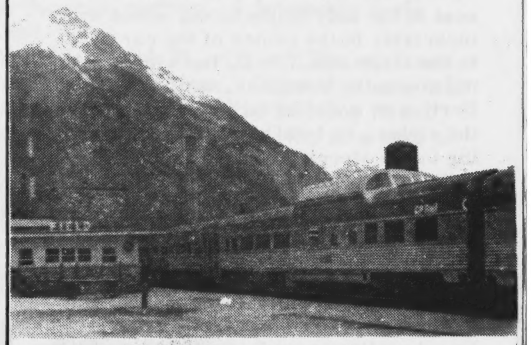
by Patricia Russell

A few weeks before VIA's summer timetable change, I made a round trip between Vancouver and Winnipeg using both Canadian transcontintal trains.

To my surprise and delight, the Canadian Pacific hadn't changed much in the ten years since I'd ridden it out to Lake Louise. The big, old train cars are still comfortable. Irritants which in less cheerful company might have been depressing seemed minor among the enthusiastic and helpful crew and convivial passengers. The beige decor of my 26-year old roomette, accented by a morgue-like black slab shade pulled down in frontof the rolled-away bed was macabre enough to seem funny. The moisture condensing between the double glass panes of my window was easy to ignore, as I could easily leave it and join the perpetual party of Commonwealth travelers musing on politics and the passing Canadian scenery in the round-end observation lounge; or better still, find a seat in a marvelous dome with clear views in every direction. There, the conscientious Passenger Services Agent gave enthusiastic picture-taking advice on the spectacular scenery, with the aid of a route brochure from the 1950s. How nice it would be if passengers could have then, again!

The skill of the Passenger Rep extended into other areas too. I eavesdropped with admiration as he cheered an elderly passenger out of her anger at having a roomette like mine instead of a modernized one like those in the next car.

The dining car staff unnecessarily alienated at least one gentleman who scolded the steward for the 1 hour and 40 minute wait he'd had in the corridor for the second seating at dinner. Apparently he and several others who heeded the first call to dinner were not told that there would be a second call, and so all had stood in the passage a weary length of time. The steward neither explained nor sympathized, and so the unpleasant situation was left to fester. This incident is illustrative of the way railway staffs, like the staffs of hospitals, sometimes maintain an in-group mystique about what they do which can baffle and unnecessarily inconvenience their customers. VIA management was well advised to have hired such a good advocate for its passengers, but how strange to have him working away to cheer passengers at one end of the train while the steward was demoralizing them in the diner.



The CANADIAN at Field, B. C.

The scenery from the front of the empty dome at night as I watched the engine light illuminate now a boulder, now a tree, now the river, was fascinating. The Passenger Rep agreed, when he found me there, that I was better off doing that than joining the bingo game he was promoting.

The brown and gold beauty of the prairies east of the Rockies was spellbinding to this admirer of California's summer-brown hills. There were deer, antelope, jack rabbits and in many sloughs Mallard families to observe. Most colorful of all, after the giant sunsets, were the huge orange and yellow grain elevators that loomed up every so often as a reminder of the prairie people who were still suffering from the floods of the previous month. Few plows were out yet, even in late May, and as we neared Winnipeg we saw small icy areas and patches of snow remaining.

We arrived in Winnipeg about 30 minutes late. A few days later in that city I boarded the CN's SUPER CONTINENTAL for my return. I eagerly anticipated

the train, stimulated by the CP staff's admiring talk of the CN full-length dome.

Well, I didn't like the dome lounge at all, for two reasons: First of all I felt seasick after a spate of trying to see out the scratched Lexan windows. I'd rather look thru glass covered with chicken wire. And second, the cocktail lounge-like seating arrangements with chairs clustered around little tables made me uncomfortable about where to sit. There was no way to tell whether a group already formed was a closed party or a cluster of strangers, and rather than intrude I would choose a seat at the only empty table, which was invariably in the center of the car next to the staircase. Well, the window of my roomette was glass, and my porter, Bert, was a wonderful informant about the sights, so I did most of my traveling in my sleeping car.

The modernized decor that I'd missed on CP did not make up for the lack of a round-end observation car and conventional dome seating with everyone facing the view and welcome. And now in the refurbished diner I was distracted by the waitresses' blue-gray nylon smocks with an unmistakeable air of a beauty school about them.

The Montreal section had been four hours late into Winnipeg. The crew expected the passengers to join us via bus at Edmonton, but they never caught up, so the train was less than half full all the way to Vancouver, and I missed the party atmosphere of the CP.

But I wouldn't have traded the scenery. The prairie vistas were even bigger than on the CP route, and coming into Jasper in the evening was a wonderful experience. The conductor, porter and I kept a twilight vigil for the moose and wolves they'd seen in the area as the train curved around the base of a row of gigantic mountains, following a milk-green river out into a valley surrounded by overlapping rows of uncountable giants.

The food was good again, my updated roomette was a pleasant replica of the first, and the air conditioning worked all the way. I detrained in Vancouver, wishing VIA as well as its staff believes it will do. Then, following my porter's instructions, I caught a bus which got me to Hudson Bay Co. before closing time to buy pure Canadian maple syrup to bring home.

Prairie scenery is frequently underrated; but CN view of sunrise over prairie lakes was beautiful.

Trio of grazing antelope near Jasper seem unconcerned at CN train's approach.

SUPER CONTINENTAL stops at Edmonton. Photos by the author.

AMTRAK SCHEDULE CHANGES

Amtrak's midsummer schedule changes took effect July 29, and the rail corporation issued new timetables for that occasion, including a blue-and-white system timetable. Many of the changes were already given in these pages. The SAN JOAQUIN was the biggest change, with a flip-flopped schedule that saw it leaving Oakland at dinner time and leaving Bakersfield at 6:05am. There's still a bus connection to and from Los Angeles, and L.A. arrival is now at 4 in the morning--a sort of overnight service to Southern California. Already indications are that the new schedule is a big success, with the train carrying 120 passengers for San Francisco on Aug 6, and as many as 80 boarding at Bakersfield on some days.

As noted before, the INTER-AMERICAN began daily sleeper service between Chicago and Ft. Worth Jul 29 (daily summer service, rather than tri-weekly, began Jun 15). The sleeper was suspended on the Ft. Worth-Laredo portion. A tri-weekly train schedule will resume after Labor Day, Sept 3.

The LAKE SHORE began serving Sandusky, Ohio on Jul 29, with a 9:33am westbound stop and 10:25 eastbound. No ticket agent is on duty there. Ceremonies were held for the first train departure. The former Penn Central station building is not used, but rather the stone REA building, which Amtrak is remodelling at a cost of $40,000. The lobby will include a public telephone.

Minor Northeast Corridor adjustments were made Jul 29, with up to 16mins added to some schedules and up to 8mins subtracted from others. The CHESAPEAKE added a stop at Edmondson Avenue, Baltimore. The Boston-Providence segment of the BEACON HILL, suspended Apr 29, resumed service, leaving Boston at 5:05pm. A new train,

Train 710, the SAN JOAQUIN, leaving Oakland for the first time on its evening departure schedule on Jul 29, passes the China Station Restaurant, the former Berkeley SP station, behind engine 290. Photo by Message Media.

no. 241, operates from NY to Philadelphia Sundays at 6:50pm, replacing Sunday service on train 227, to help alleviate crowding on train 177, the 7pm departure. Due to low ridership, the NIGHT OWL discontinued its stop at Old Saybrook CT, and the BANKERS its stop at Windsor Locks CT. Train 202 added a stop at Princeton Junction, and the VALLEY FORGE dropped that stop from its schedule. Train 601 and train 614 added stops at Malvern to make possible a one-day roundtrip to Harrisburg. Train 601 discontinued its stop at Merion.

The Rio Grande effective Aug 3 changed the times of its RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR, eastbound train 18, to allow connections from the eastbound PIONEER and SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR. This change did not make it into the Amtrak system timetable. The eastbound train is now 30 minutes later at all points, leaving Ogden (van connection) at 6:30am and leaving Salt Lake City at 7:30am. Denver arrival is 9:30pm. The railroad advertised the changes in newspapers ("America's favorite train ride.")

OCTOBER AMTRAK CHANGES

Many October changes depend on the outcome of the Amtrak bill, which will not be completed until after Labor Day. This creates a problem of timing for Amtrak, which must have at least 30 days' warning in order to institute route changes or discontinuances. Amtrak's Board will meet on Aug 29 and may or may not decide on some changes it believes it must make on Oct 1. One of the questions is that if

(continued on page 19)

THE LAST RAIL PASS

by Ronald VanderKooi

On the last day that lower-priced Rail Passes were available (and just a few days before Amtrak discontinued all Rail Pass sales), I got one for our family of five plus the hard-to-get reservations for our five-stop triangle trip into the West via Los Angeles and Seattle. Our plan was to visit friends in Albuquerque, Los Angeles, Ventura and San Francisco and then return, on the only space available, via Seattle. I looked forward to riding the old, comfortable EL CAPITAN cars which I'd recently enjoyed on a jaunt from Galesburg back into Chicago.

Following recent standard practice, our train, the SOUTHWEST LIMITED, was late backing into Chicago Union Station. Then it stopped for 20 minutes at the ICG Junction. It was dark when we reached Galesburg, which was celebrating its Railroad Days with parades and tours of the redecorated Burlington station and its yards and shops there. Having been in Fort Madison a few times, I was able to pick out the Mississippi River bridge, the station and other landmarks in the dark.

I forced myself off at Kansas City, wanting very much to see the inside of its massive Union Station. The new conductor warned me not to, since we were late and he'd "known the train to leave in as little as four minutes." Ten minutes later the Kansas City passengers came down the ramp, and 30 minutes later we left town. That'll teach me to ask train crews!

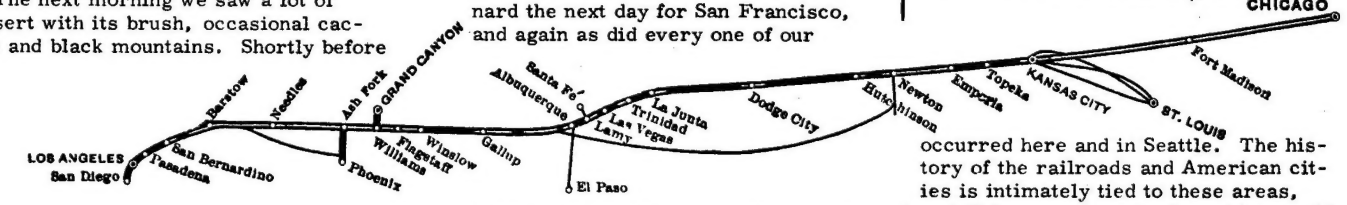
Early in the morning I awoke to see and photograph Newton, Dodge City and Garden City, Kansas. We hit speeds consistently in the 90s, and once reached 103mph. Then we were into Lamar, where the Santa Fe adds an engine to help No. 3 up Raton Pass. It was a beautiful day of sunshine and scattered showers to view from our dirty and overheated dome. (The diner and lounge car air conditioning also failed on this train and on the one we boarded a day later in Albuquerque.) It was a scenic ride down the mountain, with peaks and streams in view and the historic towns of Las Vegas and Lamy, as well as the off-the-beaten-trail pueblo of San Felipe. Other travelers, like us, got off at Albuquerque to spend a day in old Santa Fe and the pueblo country.

The next day we were with a hundred others at Albuquerque who rushed for seats on the SOUTHWEST. About 40 were given space in the lounge car. Somewhere about 20 Indians boarded and took their place in the lower lounge of a full-length dome.

Having studied for a summer in the Gallup area, we were glad to see the red rock country and pause in Gallup. Near there, as a full moon rose, we had one of our two stops due to false hotbox indications.

The next morning we saw a lot of desert with its brush, occasional cactus and black mountains. Shortly before Barstow, fertile, well-irrigated farms began to appear. Crawling into that town, we beheld a fabulous McDonald's restaurant with a railroad motif including several freight and passenger cars, a water and a switchman's tower and much more.

We'd been delayed twice by slow-moving freights, and we crawled into Barstow with the conductor promising to have that dispatcher's job. He also gave a "Hey, over here!" to an electrician, who took exception to "being yelled at." This was followed by trainmen and electricians cursing each other out of earshot. Finally the diner's electricity was restored, and breakfast was called about 90 minutes out of Los Angeles. Since we were 90 minutes late, it was announced that passengers connecting to the northbound COAST STARLIGHT would be bused from Pasadena to Glendale. At L.A., those connecting with the 10:30 SAN DIEGAN were let off the train first.



The next day we took the 8:30am SAN DIEGAN to Fullerton for a good bus connection to Disneyland, and caught the last one back there at 9:30pm. Both trains were on time and ran about half full. We stayed with friends at Ventura, north of L.A., for two days, spending one in Santa Barbara, where we managed to see the north and southbound COAST STARLIGHTS, both very long trains including domes. A couple yelled in futility as they saw their baggage leaving town at the open baggage car door. I hope it made it to the next station without falling off and was satisfactorily returned. On the positive side, the agent there had a well-decorated station (most stations had pro-Amtrak newspaper articles and cartoons posted) and he sent me a copy of his bumper sticker, "Have you hugged your Amtrak train today?"

We boarded the STARLIGHT at Oxnard the next day for San Francisco, and again as did every one of our trains, it played to a capacity crowd. It features a beautiful ride along the Pacific Coast, thru the coastal mountains and thru the fertile Salinas Valley.

Lunch was decent in the lounge car, the dining car wait was too long for those debarking at San Francisco, and I enjoyed the dome ride above the old Turquoise Room (which is now desecrated by the storage of supplies and attendant bags).

A friendly bus driver deposited us across the Bay Bridge at the Trans-Bay Terminal, while hundreds were competing for our train seats at Oakland. San Francisco without its cable cars, which were out for five weeks of repair, is still appealing. We were able to move all around the city quickly with the 25¢-fare, free-transfer, municipal system, but we erred in riding BART under the bay at rush hour. The return trip was a pleasure with lots of room as we observed the nonchalant operator and her digital speedometer at 25, 22, 37, 38, 50, 62, 74 and finally 86mph. (I trust that she manages better than the attractive head end STARLIGHT brakeperson who was rescued by two other running trainmen who managed to throw a switch shortly before the southbound STARLIGHT would have either plowed into our or come to a rather quick, embarrassing stop.)

Two nights later we boarded the STARLIGHT at Oakland to head for Seattle. My wife testified that the moonlight ride in Northern California was beautiful, and the next day was also scenic, tho this time Mt. Hood and Mt. Rainier were hidden by low clouds.

Despite late running, we went into Portland five minutes early, and I used the time to circle and take pictures in its old skid row. As a sociologist, I've been researching these areas many years, and I was amazed to see how much "Old Town" redevelopment has occurred here and in Seattle. The history of the railroads and American cities is intimately tied to these areas, and Chicago and most other cities could well learn from these places which are attracting hordes of visitors and business people into their historic buildings, restaurants, boutiques, antique shops, etc., without demolition.

We followed Puget Sound into Tacoma and Seattle a little late, and quickly found a reasonable, clean hotel nearby. The next day we used the free downtown buses to explore Seattle's Pioneer (skid road), the exotic Public Market and connect with the 25¢ aging monorail (Disneyland's is more attractive and boasts that it is "third generation monorail").

Our EMPIRE BUILDER was 40 minutes late leaving Seattle due to late engine delivery. Thus I had a chance to tour Superliner equipment assigned to the MOUNT RAINIER, but it was too close to sample the champagne offered with it.

Our train was soon into the Cascades, where we saw numerous deer and, at last, a few mountain tops. The next day we were soon into the Rockies and

(#191)

observing the grandeur of Glacier Park where the conductor drew the dome riders' attention to a snow-white mountain goat where he'd seen a score of them over the past week. The air was clean and the Flathead River was beautiful. As usual, we enjoyed the French Toast for breakfast. The ham was very good at dinner, but the hot turkey sandwich seemed Amtrak's best buy away from breakfast.

Our first cue as to the lounge car service had been the waiter's surliness at Seattle. He muttered whenever he had to get off his seat throughout the trip. Much of the time he was out at lunch or on a break. The car became a pig pen, and I finally moved a big box from the aisle into the trash. He had the audacity to order passengers to clean up at midnight. I got a complaint form from the conductor, who explained that the attendant had "an awful hard job." I suggested to Amtrak that they fire or remotivate him rather than give me a polite response letter. Too many employees get paid well, tho they're just along for the ride. Most, however, were friendly and helpful, tho some were, as one explained to her car, "new to the job and would try to help us".

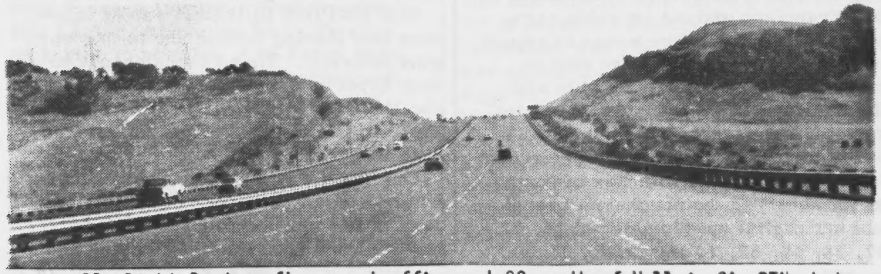
The next morning we slid, surprisingly on time, past downtown Minneapolis. We wasted an hour, as scheduled, at the new station in the middle of nowhere. We enjoyed the ride along the Mississippi and across Wisconsin, now running late. But due to the lax scheduling we made up most of our time. Only those with close plane connections were at all tense as we arrived on a cool Chicago Saturday evening, two days after our pass had expired.

VACATION TIME: EMPTY HIGHWAYS, UNTENDED FORT

by James Russell

Our regular summer vacation occurred during the last two weeks of July, and for an unprecedented fortnight there was no one tending the fort at RTN. A big sack of mail awaited our return. Besides the absence of your editor, our subscription fulfillment secretary has gone to Europe with her husband until after Labor Day (she promised to get us a picture of the Night Ferry, the boat-train across the English Channel; a postcard from her said only that the ferry had standing room only). In the meantime, we will make do as well as we can. If you get a subscription renewal notice after you've already renewed, don't be alarmed; it will be due to our taking shortcuts with the system in order to keep the presses rolling. We'll try our best to prevent anyone from missing an issue until help returns.

What does the editor of RTN do on vacation? He drives his gas-guzzling auto, of course--to his favorite Sierra spot that trains unfortunately do not serve. The most significant thing about this summer was that highway traffic on Interstate 80 was down very sharply. Especially notable by their relative absence were recreational vehicles, boats on trailers, trucks and other such large vehicles. The news said that Lake Tahoe resorts' business was off 20%. We saw vacancy signs everywhere except at public campgrounds, something one never sees at this time of year. Our estimate was that I-80 traffic was down 30-50%. Driving



Abnormally light Sunday afternoon traffic on I-80 north of Vallejo CA. RTN photo.

was much more pleasant as a result--the highway seemed to be carrying just the right amount of traffic. Gasoline was easy to obtain, even on Sundays. The price for regular gas varied from 97¢ to $1.01 per gallon. It seemed that the price of fuel and not its availability was keeping people off the road. If so, Amtrak's high patronage should continue, as some Amtrak people were predicting. Now if only Amtrak would start an auto-ferry service to Truckee and Reno...

Mixed Train of Thoughts

TWO RTN CORRESPONDENTS, Pete Bretz and Ken Maylath, rode the CARDINAL in July with its equipment of newly electrified coaches. Coaches 4601 and 4602--formerly numbered 4401 and 4402--were mixed with Amfleet cars, an electrified sleeper (2880) and baggage. The two ex-UP cars carried the new earth-toned upholstery in place of the brilliant reds and purples of earlier Amtrak refurbishing efforts. Pete says he was extremely pleased with the newly done cars, calling them "the best thing Amtrak has done yet". There is plenty of leg room. The leg rests are the original UP style, while the seat backs might have been new, but were like the originals. The cars had a P.A. system hooked into the Amfleet system, and the outer window panes were a new type of Lexan known as MR5000, which is supposed to resist scratching. Passengers thought they were brand new cars, and praised the big windows ("Much better than those old Amfleet cars."). Amtrak expects to have a set of all-electrified equipment ready for the LAKE SHORE LIMITED next month. As of July 24, 20 cars had been completed--8 coaches, 8 sleepers, and 4 baggage cars. When the first diners are completed, by mid-September, the cars should begin service on the LAKE SHORE LIMITED.....

* * *

AMTRAK IS SELLING beach towels that carry the slogan "Amtrak puts the beach within reach." They picture a front view of a cartoon engine wearing sunglasses and a hat. The towels sell for $10 each. Amtrak also has a "frisbee-like disc" of plastic with the slogan "Get around on Amtrak" that sells for $1.50. These are both available by mail from Western Folder Distribution Co., 850 W. Fullerton Ave., Addison IL 60101. Make checks out to Amtrak Travel Center.....

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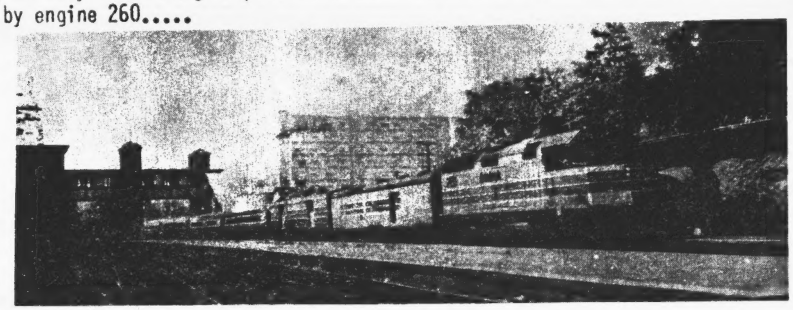
AMTRAK'S BIGGEST MONTH: June was the busiest month in history for the Amtrak system, with about 2,050,000 people riding the trains--the first time the system has exceeded the 2 million mark. For comparison, June 1978 had 1,651,000 riders. In June the ARTS system handled 511,008 reservations, compared to 224,843 the previous June. And calls to Central Reservations Offices totaled 7,980,599 this June, compared to 2,013,300 in June 1978. The average trip length in June was 9% higher than the year before, and passenger miles were up 36%, with total sales up 38%. For the month of May, Amtrak just reported that systemwide ridership was up 16.8% over May 1978, with long distance up 27.9%, short distance up 30.1%, and Northeast Corridor ridership increasing 6.3%.....

AMTRAK'S SCHENECTADY STATION opened in a ceremony on August 8. The $4.7 million project was a joint effort of Amtrak, who contributed 2/3 of the cost, the state of New York (1/3), and the city, which donated land and $30,000. With the new station opening, Colonie NY becomes a flag stop, with no checked baggage service or station agent, tho the waiting room is open at train times. The Empire Service trains will stop at Colonie, but not the LAKE SHORE LIMITED. The new Schenectady station actually went into service July 29, before the ceremony. And a strange story titled "Amtrak's Twilight Zone" in a local paper told of an Amtrak passenger boarding at

he old station, but on his return trip he was put off at the new station location, a few blocks west of the old one, later the same day. He couldn't immediately find is car, which had been towed to the new site. While he was away the old station ad been demolished. Business has been heavy on the Empire Service route, as elsehere, and the photo below, by Jerome Rosenfeld, shows train 63, the NIAGARA RAINOW, on July 14 at Poughkeepsie with 6 Amfleet cars rather than the normal four, ed by engine 260.....



SUPERLINER BAGGAGE CAR problem is vexing Amtrak. Inside transition cannot be made between Superliner cars and regular baggage cars. Amtrak wanted to convert existing hi-level cars into transition cars, which would also provide dorm space for crew. Amtrak President Alan Boyd rejected this plan as too expensive. Alternative plans are to convert the baggage area in Superliner coach/baggage cars into dorm space; to have the baggageman ride in a Superliner car and go outside at each station to open the baggage car, but this would add from 1 to 4 minutes' time to each stop and would for example require 58 minutes of time to be added to the schedule of the EMPIRE BUILDER. Another "solution" is to cut out baggage service, and Amtrak seriously considered this, but apparently is rejecting it. Another solution, and probably the best, is to convert all present hi-level cars to head end power, thus making the existing transition cars available for use on Superliner trains.....

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AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT on DOT Secretary-designate Neil Goldschmidt: when the former Portland Mayor wavered on supporting the PIONEER, it was an aide, the son of Congressman Robert Duncan, who talked Goldschmidt into adopting his pro-Amtrak stance. Robert Duncan, who saved the PIONEER in the House, is the one we criticized earlier for an anti-Amtrak stance, being a former SP attorney.....

THE PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL has been cancelled until about Sep 15 after a ship hit the railroad bridge at New Westminster, B.C. and put it out of commission, apparently on Sunday July 29. Amtrak is busing passengers to Blaine, Washington, where they must walk across the Canadian border to a Canadian bus and vice versa. The train had been scheduled to operate with Superliner cars from Seattle on July 31, and a test clearance run was made on July 24 on the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL, with one Superliner car operated behind Amfleet with a buffer car between.....

SUPERLINER COACH 34004 deadheaded from Seattle to California on the STARLIGHT on Aug 5, and will be assigned for crew training in Oakland preparing for eventual conversion of the STARLIGHT to Superliner equipment.....

FINAL AMTRAK BILL will require Amtrak to make route discontinuances based on projected 1980 ridership figures. If routes must be cut in October, Amtrak has two options: (1) cut them right away, or (2) seek interim funding from Congress so the cuts can be made in an orderly manner a little later. Legally, Amtrak can take 12 months to make cuts, but it has to have enough money to keep the doomed trains running in the interim. Rail supporters feel that time is on their side. The delay of the final legislation until after the August recess gives them more time to work on legislators, and one hopes that the high ridership will continue thru the summer (our experience on our vacation leads us to believe it

will--the high cost of gasoline and not its availability seems to be keeping highway travel down). Now is the time to contact legislators again, especially with Carter in a weakened political position, and after his first public display of support for trains (see page 5). Remember, he said that "trains represent the future". Train supporters should ride them all they can this month, and complain to their Congressmen if they can't get space on them.....

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THE "HIT LIST" trains--nearly all of them have flaws designed in that make them vulnerable. Notes one observer, the NATIONAL LIMITED should be extended to Denver, the HILLTOPPER has too circuitous a route in Virginia, the LONE STAR should run on SP Dallas-Houston and other problems, the FLORIDIAN misses Atlanta. There's no rationale at all for discontinuing one Florida train. The NORTH COAST HIAWATHA is the most threatened train of all, and it's seen as a political train with Mike Mansfield no longer around to support it. The equipment shortage and breakdowns that are Amtrak's own fault have hurt both of the Chicago-Seattle trains. Many people agree that the HIAWATHA is the stronger route, and ridership often exceeds that of the EMPIRE BUILDER. These trains should all be improved instead of being cut. The state took action with the SAN JOAQUIN that could save it from the hit list, by changing the schedule in a way that seems to be benefiting it markedly.....

THE SAN JOAQUIN changed its schedule on Jul 29, and Caltrans Director Adriana Gianturco kicked off the change the next day by taking a bus from Sacramento to Stockton to ride the train into Richmond, where brief ceremonies were held. She then boarded the outbound SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR to return to Sacramento. Said she, "This revised schedule is an important step towards strengthening the role of passenger trains as an energy efficient and convenient travel alternative for California." Gianturco said that Caltrans would support sharing the cost of the train provided Amtrak worked on the crew problems that run up costs, and work to extend the route to Los Angeles. The Caltrans lawsuit to stop the train cutbacks is still going ahead, and a hearing is expected on it in August. During August, conductors on the SAN JOAQUIN will give passengers a coupon good between Sep 4 and 30 for a roundtrip on the train at $1 over the one-way fare (50¢ over for children).....

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THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION announced at a ceremony at Grand Central Terminal on Aug 8 that a $78 million contract had been let (to General Railway Signal Co. of Rochester) to upgrade signals on the NY-Washington run, as part of the NEC Improvement project..... AMTRAK'S PUBLIC AFFAIRS Department lost the services of Joe Vranich on Aug 3. Joe, previously with the National Association of RR Passengers, was a strong rail advocate who will be missed at Amtrak. He takes a public relations position with the Grumman Corporation in Washington.....

WILL E-L ELECTRIC lines get re-electrified? A new group in Millburn, New Jersey called the "Lackawanna Coalition" is trying to get NJDOT to speed up this re-electrification. Dues are $3 per year (to Box 283, Millburn NJ 07041).....

NEW YORK TIMES printed another outrageous anti-Amtrak editorial on July 31, repeating all the old DOT misconceptions (see excerpts in Quotes of the Week, page 4). But the Times's Tom Wicker has a better attitude, and about the same date (July 30?) he wrote that the House had the "common sense to save Amtrak from the gutting originally proposed for it by Brock Adams". He praised the capital funding part of the Amtrak bill--"a major need if Amtrak is ever to offer the kind of service that will lure large numbers of people out of autos and airplanes".....

THE COAST STARLIGHT northbound Aug 6 from Portland was powered by two BN freight units after the two SDP40F's went dead. We hear more and more stories that most of Amtrak's SDP40F fleet is long overdue for major overhauls, but Amtrak doesn't have the money to have the work done. The STARLIGHT was two hours late.....

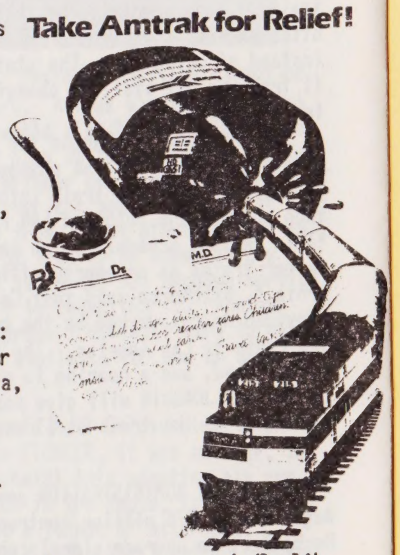
WASHINGTON STATE SOURCES say that the constitution of the state forbids participation in joint funding of services like Amtrak 403-b arrangements. State DOT officials are studying a proposed constitutional amendment.....

TRANSPORT 2000 CANADA is looking for a National Executive Director, who should be a Ca[illegible]n citizen, former Canadian, or received immigrant. Salary is $1500 per month. The starting date is mid-September preferably, and to submit application and vita (by Aug 30), telephone Harry Gow at 819-827-0157 or Michael Jackson at 306-522-1294. There will be an interview in Ottawa between Sep 7 & 10.....

THE PULLMAN COMPANY said in early August that it was urging the New York City Transit Authority to remove backup hand brakes from its new subway cars, calling them a "safety hazard". The hand brake assemblies were built by an unidentified subcontractor for Pullman-Standard.....

THE NEW YORKER magazine of Aug 6 carries a most interesting article about New York's Grand Central Terminal. And concerning the New Yorker's E. M. Frimbo, we understand he has undergone serious surgery, and we wish him a speedy recovery...

THE ADJOINING POSTER design of Amtrak's appears on the new July 29 system timetable cover. It shows an Amtrak train emerging from a medicine bottle, and the accompany caption reads: "Don't let gas pains upset your travel plans--Take Amtrak for relief!".....



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: last issue on p. 17 the date of the Newark drawbridge problem, July 6, was omitted. On p. 6 the cost of the CN station in Vancouver should have been $4 million. On p. 20 in the consist of VIA train 171, there should be no comma after "Club 52".....

SOME AMTRAK MANAGERIAL changes effective Aug 1: George L. Sharp, former Baltimore Division Manager goes to NY to replace Charles Lowe. James L. Cira, former Western Manager, goes to Baltimore, while Lou Maxberry becomes Acting Western Manager.....

SUPERLINERS ARE RUNNING to St. Louis, on trains 301 and 304, the ANN RUTLEDGE. The Superliner diner has been running Chicago-Quincy, and will go on trains 301-304 the week of Aug 19. The diner has served full meals on six occasions, and passengers reportedly like it. The diner began its present operation in late July.....

TWO MORE SUPERLINERS, cars 34004 and 34008, have been assigned to Seattle, arriving there at the rear of the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA on Aug 3. The MOUNT RAINIER used 7 Superliner cars on July 22. Due to parts shortages, one Seattle Superliner car, 34035, is being cannibalized for parts on an interim basis.....

FORMER TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY Brock Adams on a TV interview program Aug 5 with the Washington Star's Steve Aug, said that he had been interested in cutting "political" trains from the Amtrak system, and allowing states to pick up shares for funding of more Amtrak runs if they desired. This does not jibe with his plan to eliminate sold-out 18-car NY-Florida trains, and leaves some wondering whether Adams knew what his DOT staff was up to.....

SANTA FE RAILWAY reportedly has asked Budd Company about new passenger car costs, thinking of buying cars to lease to Amtrak to cover the badly-depleted consists of the SOUTHWEST LIMITED..... THE COAST STARLIGHT was seen southbound in Oakland Aug 5 with a long consist of 2 SP engines, 2 Amtrak engines, 18 Amtrak cars, and 2 deadhead SP business cars..... WESTBOUND EMPIRE BUILDER derailed when a van being chased at about 100mph by deputy sheriffs crashed into the lead engine, derailing it, the second engine, a heater car and 2 baggage cars, and setting the first coach, car 4862, afire from its exploding gas tank. The van driver was killed but there were no injuries on the train. The collision was 3 miles east of Spokane. BN engines and heater car from Spokane brought the train in 2-3 hours late. Two deadheading Superliner cars, 34011 and 34022, were on the rear of the train in the July 17 accident..... HARRISBURG PATRIOT-NEWS (Jul 22) claims that Amtrak's Alan Boyd wrote to 4 Congressmen in support of the proposed DOT cutbacks.....

MORNING LIBERTY EXPRESS, train 191, derailed near Warwick RI at 7:30am Aug 4 when it hit rain-washed mud and debris on the track at 70mph. Two cars derailed and 4 employees were slightly injured, while a 3-hour delay for Corridor passengers ensued..... THE NORTHBOUND MONTREALER was delayed 6hrs by a freight derailment in Maryland, slow switching in NY, and a freight derailment north of Springfield Aug 4. Train was turned at Springfield..... AMTRAK'S BOARD APPROVED July 25 $41 million to buy 15 more AEM-7 electric locos for the Corridor.....

THE BLACK HAWK was annulled Jul 10 night & Jul 11 morn due to 27-car freight derail on ICG west of Genoa IL... News in this issue is updated thru Aug 8, 1979.

FALL SCHEDULE CHANGES (continued from page 11)

the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA is dropped, will the remaining Chicago-Seattle service operate daily? Amtrak says that it would probably run Minneapolis-St. Cloud-Fargo and thence on the EMPIRE BUILDER route, but it is not known whether daily operation would be approved.

Amtrak has already made many plans for the startup of the Los Angeles-Ogden train (a train that railfans are nicknaming the "Cannonball" after Senator Cannon of Nevada who was instrumental in obtaining it). At the July 26 Board meeting Amtrak authorized track and station improvements along the route at a cost of $840,000. A new station shelter will be installed at Milford, Utah and space leased and prepared from the Union Plaza Hotel in Las Vegas, where the station is located. Communication and signalling equpment also required modification.

Amtrak released the following preliminary schedule for the new train: leave Los Angeles daily at 10:40am, Pasadena 11:10, Pomona 11:40, San Bernardino 12:15, Barstow 2:25, Las Vegas NV 6:05pm, Milford UT 12:25am, Salt Lake City 3:50am, arrive Ogden 5:30am; southbound, leave Ogden 12:40am, arrive Salt Lake 1:45am, Milford 5:25am, Las Vegas 10:20am, Barstow 1:50pm, San Bernardino 3:45, Pomona 4:20, Pasadena 5:05pm, Los Angeles 5:40pm. The train will at first use long-distance Amcoaches, Amdinette, sleeper and baggage, and will make connections in both directions in Ogden to the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR. When Superliner cars are available for the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, Amtrak plans to make the train the "City of Everywhere", with 3 sections of thru Superliner cars running from Chicago (to serve the ZEPHYR, the PIONEER, and the Las Vegas train). The new train will be numbered 35 and 36. The SF ZEPHYR can be expected to leave Oakland earlier, at 11:50am, to arrive Ogden at 5:25am. The PIONEER will probably leave Seattle in the evening instead of the morning--at 9:30pm--and reach Ogden at 8:15am. It would leave Ogden at 10:45pm and be in Seattle at 8pm (presently 9:50pm).

On Oct 28, the regular Daylight Saving Time changeover, a seventh SAN DIEGAN may begin operation. The LAKE SHORE LIMITED will be scheduled to leave Chicago 4 hours later, at 7:30pm. The COAST STARLIGHT schedule may be lengthened by at least 40 minutes between Portland and Seattle because of continuing speed restrictions on the BN on SDP40F engines. The BROADWAY LIMITED will be rescheduled, and negotiations with Conrail are now going on to do this, but we have no details. The state of New York wants Amtrak to extend Empire Service trains that now terminate in Albany, to Schenectady. The PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL may be rescheduled later southbound, breaking the connection to the STARLIGHT. The state of Illinois wants train 300 to be eliminated and train 308 operated daily. If the LONE STAR is discontinued, Amtrak may split the INTER-AMERICAN to continue serving Houston, and will consider re-routing the SOUTHWEST LIMITED via Topeka.

RAIL CANADA (continued from page 8)

tions of new marketing initiatives by VIA Rail, cooperation thru incentive contracts by CN and CP, and re-equipping of the trains by VIA and the federal gov't.

The Final Plan includes detailed proposed schedules, and we will try to bring you more details on them later.

VIA'S TURBO TRAINS returned to service on July 30 between Montreal and Toronto, making one afternoon trip each way daily, with morning service provided by conventional equipment. They had been withdrawn after one was destroyed by fire May 29.

VIA RAIL'S CONSOLIDATION of Vancouver stations at the CN station will take place on Oct 28, H. F. Murray, V-P VIA West, announced in mid-July.

AN "ADAMS PLAN" for Canada? The Ministry of Transport (Transport Canada's) plan to cut back trains ala the U.S. DOT's attempt is becoming clearer, report Canadian rail supporters. The MOT has prepared papers in anticipation of a meeting of senior civil servants with the new Transport Minister on or about Aug 17. The civil servants are reportedly very frustrated with the fact that rail passenger abandonments haven't been faster in coming. Ray Bechard, an ex-MOT civil servant, said at a recent Science Council of Canada meeting: "VIA has only been able to reduce passenger train miles by about 5% since taking over." He said VIA hoped the CTC would have fewer powers in future, and that VIA would have more powers in such matters. Ron Taborek at MOT reportedly has devised a plan to eliminate all passenger trains outside the Corridor and some within it. The idea is to make VIA independent of CTC authority. The only criterion worth mentioning for abandonment would be failure of a train to cover 25% of all its assigned costs. And the Southern Ontario Intermodal Study will call for curtailed rail services soon.

We expect RTN's book, ISSUES IN AMERICAN RAIL TRAVEL, to be in the mail by the end of August. Our apologies to all who have previously ordered it, for the delay in getting it ready. If you haven't ordered yet, please do so now.

COMING OUT NEXT: RTN's long-awaited Yearbook (the price of the yearbook will continue to be $3.50 (plus tax to California) until publication date is announced, after which the price will be higher due to inflation since the original announcement). Thank you for waiting.

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LATEST AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

	MAR	APR
Metroliners	152,988	146,014
N.E. Corr. Conventional	432,517	459,095
New Haven-Springfield	29,351	30,072
NY-Philadelphia	205,196	191,384
Phila-Harrisburg	87,783	82,442
NY-Harrisburg	17,949	16,816
NY-Buffalo/Detroit	56,538	63,924
Chicago-St. Louis	16,512	14,855
Chicago-Milwaukee	23,944	28,598
Chicago-Detroit	36,132	46,447
Chicago-Carbondale	15,320	15,441
Chicago-Quincy	8,272	9,474
Los Angeles-San Diego	76,223	99,584
Seattle-Portland	6,601	7,075
Seattle-Vancouver	5,047	6,611
Washington-Cincinnati	5,447	5,883
Washington-Martinsburg	21,642	22,777
Oakland-Bakersfield	6,831	11,164
NY-Montreal	8,688	10,251
Chicago-Port Huron	7,802	11,187
Chicago-Dubuque	4,510	3,633
St. Paul-Duluth	4,029	3,469
Washington-Montreal	31,727	34,656
NY-Florida	76,059	86,941
Chicago-NY/Washington	14,622	21,731
Chicago-Cincinnati/Wash.	8,504	14,856
Kansas City-NY/Washington	13,449	17,188
Chicago-Seattle (north)	14,094	14,202
Chicago-Seattle (south)	13,587	15,203
Chicago-San Francisco	23,583	27,167
Chicago-Los Angeles	19,433	26,241
Chicago-Houston	21,958	26,238
Chicago-New Orleans	18,405	16,588
Chicago-Florida	15,085	14,999
Chicago-Laredo	10,995	14,533
Los Angeles-New Orleans	8,042	9,836
Los Angeles-Seattle	37,179	48,116
Chicago-NY/Boston	19,286	29,203
Boston-Newport News	49,218	56,621
NY-Savannah	33,572	41,464
Seattle-Salt Lake City	13,377	13,508
Boston-Tri-State	3,972	5,554
NY-New Orleans	17,784	21,517
Special Trains	7,657	9,037

Here are the latest Amtrak patronage figures that the corporation had released thru July 16--they cover the months of March and April, 1979, the 2 months preceding the start of the gasoline shortage in some states. The Easter weekend occurred in the middle of April this year.

Summary totals for the month of March were as follows: total Northeast Corridor: 925,784 (down 2.1% over previous year); total short distance: 303,538 (up 3.8% over Mar 1978); total long distance: 463,931 (up 1.3%); system total: 1,700,910 (down .1%).

For April the totals were: Northeast Corridor: 925,823 (up 5.7%); short distance: 360,373 (up 26.1%); long distance 556,362 (up 32.8%). (In these comparisons, note that Easter fell in March in 1978.) April system total: 1,851,595 (up 16.9%).

Some footnotes: (1) Some NE Corridor riders are shown on Boston-Newport News, NY-Savannah, & DC-Montreal lines. (2) on NY-Detroit/Buffalo, service on the Niagara Falls-Detroit portion stopped after 1/31/79. (3) Chicago-Carbondale includes Chicago-Champaign. (4) DC-Montreal includes local DC-Springfield traffic. (5) Chicago-Cincinnati/Washington included the MOUNTAINEER/HILLTOPPER ridership until 1/1/78. (6) Chicago-Seattle (south) includes Chicago-Duluth & Chic-St. Paul local riders. (7) Boston-Newport News incl. local Boston-DC riders & Boston-Tri-State excludes them. (8) NY-Savannah incl. local NY-DC riders. (9) NY-New Orleans was incl. in system on 2/1/79. See RTN 188 for earlier figures. page 21

CARS & CONSISTS

*SAN JOAQUIN, train 710, Oakland Aug 3: engine 295 (F40PHR); cars 21194, 20036 Amcafe, 21199.

*FLORIDIAN, train 57, Jacksonville Jul 30: engine 308 (F40PHR); cars 5422, 3323 "J. Printz", 4417, 5017 "Silver Cinch".

*SILVER STAR, train 82, Kissimmee-St. Petersburg Jul 30: engine 302 (F40-PHR); cars 8017, 4468, 4588, 4418, 5655, 2862 "French Broad River".

*CHAMPION, train 86, St. Pete-NYC, Jul 31: engines 643, 632 (SDP's); cars 1420, 2704 "West Palm Beach", 2794 "Pinellas City", 8020, 3311, 4414, 4448, 4465, 4432, 5013 "Silver Sword", 5454. Train 85, NYC-St. Pete Jul 29: engines 951 (off at DC), 309 (F40PHR), 637 (SDP); cars 1420, 2692, 2794 "Pinellas City", 8020, 3311, 4414, 4425, 4448, 4436, 5436, 5013 "S. Sword", 5454.

*VIA train 171, Montreal-Chicoutimi Jul 2: engines 2 box-cab electrics off at EJ Tower; 6518, 6542 (E's); cars 9629 bag, 5529 coach, 428 snack car, 5705 Club 52. About 40 passengers.

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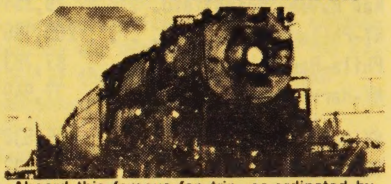

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Aug 19: First S.F. Muni LRV excursion, both surface & subway. Lv Muni Metro Center 1pm. Fare $12. Bay Area Electric Railway Assoc., c/o Neil Lang, 555 Jean St. #532, Oakland CA 94610. (415) 653-9691.

Sep 19: Steam tour with CN6060, Toronto-Newmarket-Gravenhurst & return. Lv 8am, back 9:05pm. Private car incl., photo stops, etc. $23.95, kids $19.95. (Also, Toronto streetcar tour Sep 30, Peter Witt car & LRV, $9.50.) Upper Canada Railway Society, Box 42, Postal Sta. D, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1R 4Y7.

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Note: The amount of material to be included in the Private Owner and Museum section has become so great that this will have to be covered in a separate Volume from now on. You will be advised of this volume and the price as soon as we can schedule a publication date. Our goal is to have this out before Christmas 1978.

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